

# Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Attorney General Terry Goddard, Yavapai County Sheriff Steve Waugh and Yavapai County Attorney Shelia Polk Discuss Meth Public Health Crisis**

(Prescott, Ariz. – February 15, 2005) Attorney General Terry Goddard was joined by Yavapai County Sheriff Steve Waugh and Yavapai County Attorney Shelia Polk at a news conference here today to discuss Goddard's new initiative to combat the production and use of methamphetamines. Morrey Shifman, Board volunteer for the Boys & Girls Club of Northern Arizona, also joined Goddard to discuss the club's efforts to combat meth use.

"We are in the middle of a public health crisis with meth," Goddard said. "Meth cookers are poisoning our children, putting our public safety officers in unacceptable dangers and imposing high costs on taxpayers, businesses, healthcare systems and the environment."

Goddard is working with legislators and a broad coalition of law enforcement officials to adopt a new law to make methamphetamine production more difficult by moving chemicals used by criminals to cook meth behind the pharmacy counter. The goal of the legislation, sponsored by Rep. Tom O'Halleran, is to reduce meth cooking in Arizona, begin a coordinated education effort on the dangers of meth, and update existing laws governing environmental remediation and child abuse.

"Each time a law enforcement officer enters a meth lab he or she is exposed to highly toxic elements," Waugh said. "We need to develop tools that will help curtail meth production and reduce exposure to these types of hazardous environments."

As part of his efforts, Goddard will host a Meth Summit for Western States Attorneys General on February 24. The purpose of the Summit will be to focus on the best approaches to curtail the manufacture, distribution and use of meth. Treatment and prosecution will also be discussed at the meeting.

"Besides the harm meth addicts do to themselves, meth is a common factor in many other crimes in Arizona, including ID theft, auto theft, assault and other street crimes," Polk said. "The collective impact of meth abuse is hard to overstate."

The proposed legislation is based on the experience in Oklahoma where the state legislature adopted a similar law in 2004. Since that law was adopted, Oklahoma has been successful in reducing meth lab seizures by some 80 percent in the last year.

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